



State of Louisiana

Department of Environmental Quality



May 17, 2001

M.J. "Mike" Foster
Governor

J. Dale Givens
Secretary

DEQ SAMPLING DETECTS VINYL CHLORIDE AND ARSENIC IN ADDITIONAL WELLS IN PLAQUEMINE AREA

Vinyl chloride and arsenic have been detected in some private non-drinking water wells in the vicinity of Myrtle Grove Trailer Park in Plaquemine. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality made the discovery as part of its investigation to determine the source of the contamination of the drinking water wells formerly used by the trailer park. The owners of the wells were provided these findings earlier today.

Vinyl Chloride and Arsenic Findings (in parts per billion)

Well	Vinyl Chloride	Arsenic
A	0.9 ppb	22 ppb
B	non-detect	12 ppb
C	non-detect	12 ppb
D	non-detect	16 ppb
F	non-detect	15 ppb
G	non-detect	18 ppb
H	non-detect	10 ppb
I	1.0 ppb	192 ppb *
J	non-detect	31 ppb
L	42 ppb *	21 ppb
N	6 ppb*	64 ppb *

* exceeds drinking water standard of 2 ppb for vinyl chloride and 50 ppb for arsenic

Although none of the wells are known to be used for drinking water, two of the wells showed vinyl chloride levels in excess of the drinking water standard of two parts per billion, while two showed arsenic levels greater than the 50 ppb standard. Attached is a detailed map of the well locations and a separate summary of all constituents detected in this sampling effort.

To date, DEQ has sampled and analyzed water from 11 private wells in the vicinity of the trailer park. The remaining wells did not show any traces of vinyl chloride. The Department of Health and Hospitals has sampled all drinking water systems in the area, and has not discovered vinyl chloride in other nearby systems.

DEQ's efforts began immediately following the discovery of vinyl chloride in excess of the drinking water standard at the Myrtle Grove trailer park in March. DEQ is concentrating its investigation into the area surrounding the trailer park and in areas where chemicals have been detected. DEQ will continue to search for additional existing wells to sample that may help identify the source and extent of the contamination.

DEQ will also re-sample wells that have already been tested to verify the results and establish any trends or patterns that may exist. Contamination trends are important as the agency tries to trace the contamination back to its source.

Because there is not a comprehensive inventory of private wells, DEQ is asking citizens in the area who may have or know about private water wells within the boundaries below to contact DEQ at 1-800-263-5376. The area is bounded by Bayou Plaquemine to the south, Myrtle Grove Plantation Road to the west, the Mississippi River to the east, and Highway 1148 to the north.

Information discovered by DEQ during its investigation has been provided to the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH). Dr. Jimmy Guidry, state health officer, says the question remains as to whether people are being exposed to contaminated water. He urges owners of private drinking water wells in the vicinity of the trailer park to take steps to have their drinking water tested.

DEQ will schedule an informational meeting in Plaquemine next week to further update Plaquemine residents about their investigation.

Contact Jeff Simon, Ph.D. for more information: (225) 763-5403; e-mail:

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<u>SAMPLE ID</u>	<u>CHEMICAL</u>	<u>RESULT (PPB)</u>	<u>MCL (PPB)</u>
A	VINYL CHLORIDE	0.9	2
	ARSENIC	22	50
B	NON DETECT	NON DETECT	
	ARSENIC	12	50
C	NON DETECT	NON DETECT	
	ARSENIC	13	50
D	NON DETECT	NON DETECT	
	ARSENIC	16	50
E	TRIP BLANK		
F	ARSENIC	15	50
G	ARSENIC	18	50
H	BROMODICHLOROMETHANE	23	a
	BROMOFORM	44	a
	CHLOROFORM	9	a
	DIBROMOCHLOROMETHANE	52	a,b
	ARSENIC	10	50
I	VINYL CHLORIDE	1	2
	TOLUENE	0.9	1000
	ARSENIC	192	50
J	"CIS-1,2-DICHLOROETHENE"	5	70
	ARSENIC	31	50
K	TRIP BLANK		
L	VINYL CHLORIDE	42	2
	"CIS-1,2-DICHLOROETHENE"	1	70
	ARSENIC	21	50
M	TRIP BLANK		
N	VINYL CHLORIDE	6	2

KEY:

MCL = Maximum Contaminant
Level for Drinking
Water

a = Total Trihalomethanes
100 ppb

"CIS-1,2-DICHLOROETHENE"
ARSENIC

4
64

70
50

b = Unusable data due to
outside of calibration range

